

Listing of the Claims:

1. (currently amended): In a computer network, a method of deploying a plurality of programs to a policy recipient, comprising, maintaining an association between each program and the policy recipient, at least one association corresponding to a program that is assigned as mandatory for the policy recipient to have on a computer system associated with that policy recipient, and at least one other association corresponding to a program that is published as optional for the policy recipient to have on the computer system associated with that policy recipient, determining a time for deploying each assigned program to the policy recipient and making that program available to the policy recipient at that time, and deploying each published program to the policy recipient when the published program is activated via the computer system.

2. (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein the policy recipient is a user, and wherein determining a time for deploying each assigned program to the policy recipient includes detecting that the user is logging on to the network.

3. (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein the policy recipient is a machine comprising the computer system, and wherein determining a time for deploying each assigned program to the policy recipient includes detecting that the machine is connecting to the network.

4. (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein determining a time for deploying each assigned program to the policy recipient includes polling machines in the network.

5. (previously presented): The method of claim 1 further comprising, detecting a request to run a selected one of the assigned programs, accessing the registry to locate the selected assigned program, and executing the selected assigned program.

6. (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein maintaining an association between each assigned program and the policy recipient comprises storing at least one script in association with policy information for that policy recipient.

7. (previously presented): The method of claim 6 wherein storing each script comprises maintaining a centralized directory of network objects.

8. (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein making the program available to the policy recipient comprises advertising the program as available for execution prior to installation of program code used to execute the program on the computer system, and further comprising, in response to a request to execute the program, installing the program code at the computer system and executing the program code.

9. (previously presented): The method of claim 8 wherein advertising the program as available includes adding an application shortcut to a user profile such that a user perceives the program as executable prior to installation of program code used to execute the program on the computer system.

10. (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein making the program available to the policy recipient comprises writing information to a registry associated with the policy recipient such that a request related to executing the program prior to installation of program code used to execute the program on the computer system will have corresponding information in the registry that identifies the program for automatic installation and execution thereof.

11. (previously presented): The method of claim 10 wherein writing information to the registry comprises maintaining in the registry an association between the program and class identifier information.

12. (previously presented): The method of claim 10 wherein writing information to the registry comprises maintaining in the registry an association between the program and a file extension.

13. (previously presented): The method of claim 12 further comprising, detecting a user request to open a file, determining the file extension and

accessing the registry to locate a corresponding program associated with the file extension, and opening the file with the corresponding program.

14. (previously presented): The method of claim 13 further comprising, determining if the program is locally installed, and if not installed, installing the program and executing the program to open the file.

15. (currently amended): In a computer network, a method of automatically deploying an assigned program to a policy recipient, comprising, generating a script having information therein corresponding to the assigned program, associating the script with a policy, applying the policy to the policy recipient by processing the script at a computer associated with the policy recipient to advertise the assigned program as available for execution by the policy recipient prior to installation of program code needed to execute the program, wherein the program is installed such that the program is installable on demand in response to a request to execute the program.

16. (previously presented): The method of claim 15 wherein the policy recipient is a user, and wherein applying the policy to the policy recipient is performed as part of a user network logon process.

17. (previously presented): The method of claim 15 wherein the policy recipient is a machine, and wherein applying the policy to the policy recipient is performed as part of a re-boot process of the machine.

18. (previously presented): The method of claim 15 wherein associating the script with a policy comprises maintaining the association in a centralized directory of network objects.

19. (previously presented): The method of claim 15 wherein applying the policy to the policy recipient includes adding an application shortcut to a user profile to advertise the program as available for execution.

20. (previously presented): The method of claim 15 wherein applying the policy to the policy recipient includes writing information to a registry associated with the policy recipient to advertise the program as available for execution.

21. (previously presented): The method of claim 20 wherein writing information to a registry comprises maintaining in the registry an association between the program and class identifier information.

22. (previously presented): The method of claim 20 wherein writing information to a registry comprises maintaining in the registry an association between the program and a file extension.

23. (cancelled)

24. (previously presented): In a computer network, a system for deploying programs to policy recipients, comprising, a centralized store of policy objects, at least one of the policy objects having an advertise script associated therewith, the advertise script including program information of at least one program for assigning to policy recipients, and a mechanism for applying policy objects to a policy recipient, wherein at least one of the policy objects applied to that recipient has the advertise script associated therewith, the mechanism processing the script to advertise at least one assigned program to the policy recipient such that the assigned program is advertised as available for execution by the policy recipient prior to installation of program code needed to execute the program.

25-26. (cancelled)

27. (previously presented): The system of claim 24 wherein at least one of the policy objects further associates a published program with a policy recipient, the published program deployed to a computer system corresponding to the policy recipient when the published program is activated.

28. (previously presented): The system of claim 24 wherein the policy recipient comprises a user, and wherein the mechanism processes the advertise script when the user is logging on to the network.

29. (previously presented): The system of claim 24 wherein the policy recipient comprises a machine, and wherein the mechanism processes the advertise script when the machine connects to the network.

30. (previously presented): The system of claim 24 wherein in processing the script, the mechanism adds an application shortcut to a user profile to advertise at least one assigned program to a user as being executable.

31. (previously presented): The system of claim 24 wherein in processing the script, the mechanism writes data to the registry to advertise at least one assigned program to the policy recipient.

32. (previously presented): The system of claim 31 wherein the data written to the registry comprises class identifier information.

33. (previously presented): The system of claim 31 wherein the data written to the registry comprises file extension association information.

34. (previously presented): The system of claim 24 further comprising an installer that installs an advertised program in response to a request to execute the advertised program.

35. (previously presented): In a computing environment, a method comprising:

maintaining deployment information in association with a policy recipient, the deployment information comprising:

1) assigned program data, the assigned program data identifying assigned programs that upon a deployment event are made available to the policy recipient via automatic deployment to a computer system associated with the policy recipient;

2) published program data, the published program data identifying published programs that are published to the policy recipient for optional deployment to the computer system associated with the policy recipient, each published program deployed upon a detected need for that published program;

automatically configuring a computer system associated with the policy recipient upon a deployment event, to have the assigned programs available for execution; and

configuring the computer system with a selected published program upon a detected need for that selected published program.

36. (previously presented): The method of claim 35 wherein the policy recipient is a user, and wherein the deployment event corresponds to the user logging on to the network.

37. (previously presented): The method of claim 35 wherein the policy recipient is a machine, and wherein the deployment event corresponds to the machine connecting to the network.

38. (previously presented): The method of claim 35 further comprising, detecting a request to run a selected one of the assigned programs, accessing the registry to locate data related to the selected assigned program, and executing the selected assigned program.

39. (previously presented): The method of claim 35 wherein configuring the computer system to have the assigned programs available for execution comprises advertising the program as available for execution prior to installation of program code used to execute the program on the computer system

40. (previously presented): The method of claim 39 and further comprising, in response to a request to execute the program, installing the program code at the computer system and executing the program code.

41. (previously presented): The method of claim 39 wherein advertising the program as available includes adding an application shortcut to a user profile.

42. (previously presented): The method of claim 39 wherein advertising the program as available comprises writing information to a registry associated with the policy recipient.

43. (cancelled)

44. (currently amended): A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions, comprising, maintaining an association between each program of a plurality of programs and a policy recipient, at least one association corresponding to a program that is assigned as mandatory for the policy recipient to have on a computer system associated with that policy recipient, and at least one other association corresponding to a program that is published as optional for the policy recipient to have on the computer system associated with that policy recipient, determining a time for deploying each assigned program to the policy recipient and making that program available to the policy recipient at that time, and deploying each published program to the policy recipient when the published program is activated via the computer system.

45. (previously presented): A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions, comprising:

maintaining deployment information in association with a policy recipient, the deployment information comprising:

1) assigned program data, the assigned program data identifying assigned programs that upon a deployment event are made available to the policy recipient via automatic deployment to a computer system associated with the policy recipient;

2) published program data, the published program data identifying published programs that are published to the policy recipient for optional deployment to the computer system associated with the policy recipient, each published program deployed upon a detected need for that published program;

automatically configuring a computer system associated with the policy recipient upon a deployment event, to have the assigned programs available for execution; and

configuring the computer system with a selected published program upon a detected need for that selected published program.